



Encyclopedia of Life



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The Encyclopedia of Life: Presenting Life on Earth

Earth boasts an awe-inspiring variety of living species, intertwined in a delicate web of complex, interdependent ecosystems. EOL is bringing this living world into focus, revealing life on Earth as never before.

The Encyclopedia of Life is an unprecedented effort to gather and share scientific knowledge about all living things in a single online resource, giving each of us a breathtaking view of our amazing world.

An important initiative at a crucial time

Biodiversity refers to the richness and variety of life on Earth, and this diversity provides the food, fuel, medicine and other essentials on which we rely. However, knowledge of biodiversity has been scattered all over the world, slowing research and understanding and denying access to many. With an untold number of species going unstudied and even extinct before their roles and relationships with other organisms are understood, it's crucial that we take action before it's too late.

There has never been a more urgent need for an all-encompassing resource like the Encyclopedia of Life.

Benefiting humanity, science and biodiversity

EOL seeks to energize the science of biology and accelerate global research and discovery by making trusted information about biodiversity available to people from all walks of life.

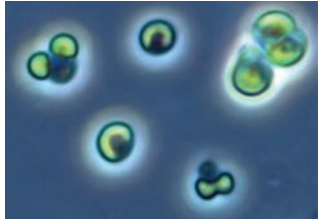
By making this information freely available to all, EOL hopes to inspire new generations of scientists and stewards of the environment to study, protect and prolong the existence of Earth's precious species.

Please join us now and help bring life on Earth into focus.

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A bold effort to document life on our planet



EOL is a sweeping global effort to gather and share the vast wealth of information on every creature—animals, plants and microorganisms—and make it available as a web-based resource.

As EOL matures, the content of EOL grows in both quantity and quality. This content includes descriptions, photos, bibliographic links, distribution maps and other rare and specialized information that has traditionally been scattered around the world in libraries, museums, herbaria, colleges and universities, databases and other storehouses of expert knowledge.

Since its inception in 2007, the global EOL community has partnered with content providers, scientific experts, learned societies and institutions. This community has worked to assemble, author and verify trusted information about hundreds of thousands of species so far.

And this is just the beginning of our efforts.

The Encyclopedia of Life is:

- An ever-expanding resource for all people to understand Earth's biodiversity
- A uniquely comprehensive and freely available source of trusted scientific information
- A partner in educational and scientific outreach programs
- A key component of biodiversity research, discovery and education
- A community of scientists, educators, students, policy workers and the general public coming together to protect Earth's biodiversity

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The energy and creativity of our community

The Encyclopedia of Life relies on the knowledge, creativity and initiative of our global volunteer community of scientists, educators, students and nature enthusiasts.

The EOL community plans to use the Encyclopedia of Life in many inventive and practical ways, such as:



- Enriching a teacher's lesson plans on conservation with detailed, scientifically verified data on threatened species
- Facilitating public recognition and awareness of invasive species—like *Cameraria ohridella*, a moth that is devastating European horse chestnut trees—making more rapid and effective responses possible
- Enabling climate researchers to link changes in butterfly populations to climate change

- Providing immediate access to scientific literature so taxonomists in developing countries can describe new species
- Allowing eco-tourists to create, download, annotate and share field guides
- Supporting industry and public safety—like identifying birds struck by aircraft and supplying information on their migration routes, altitude and timing



We can all help EOL grow

For the Encyclopedia of Life to thrive, we all must participate. EOL is being built for all of us, but it can't be built without each of us.



Join the EOL community!

- Visit eol.org and share comments
- Contribute text, images and videos
- Curate pages and contribute research through the EOL Fellows Program
- Become an EOL content partner or create a Regional EOL that focuses on a country or area
- Offer financial support in any amount

Whether you are a scientist or someone interested in learning more about the living world, you have an important role to play in growing our global understanding of biodiversity. Please get involved with EOL by investing time, creativity or financial support. The effort you make today will leave a legacy for generations to come.

To help EOL bring life on Earth into focus, visit eol.org or contact secretariat@eol.org.

A Global Effort

The Encyclopedia of Life operates as an ongoing collaboration among its cornerstone institutions and international partners:

- Atlas of Living Australia
- Biodiversity Heritage Library Consortium*
- Chinese Academy of Sciences
- Field Museum of Natural History*
- Harvard University*
- Marine Biological Laboratory*
- Missouri Botanical Garden*
- Naturalis, the National Museum of Natural History of the Netherlands
- New Library of Alexandria, Egypt
- South African National Biodiversity Institute
- Smithsonian Institution*

* EOL Cornerstone Institution

EOL gratefully acknowledges its many content partners, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation for their invaluable contributions.

For a complete list of EOL's current content partners, please visit eol.org.



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Keep EOL growing!

Support for EOL comes from the generous contributions of individuals, foundations and corporations.

Gifts of knowledge or financial support, both large and small, will help EOL document our understanding of the 1.9 million known species and the millions more yet to be discovered and described.

To learn more about how you can support and partner with the Encyclopedia of Life, please contact us at secretariat@eol.org.



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